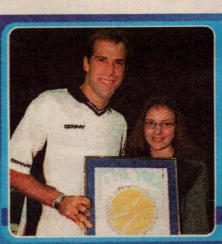
No 547 March 5, 2000

THE FUNDAY TIMES



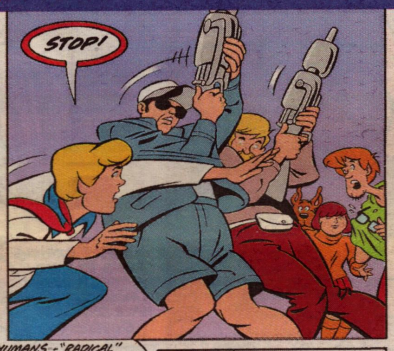
Smashing!
Funday winner Christine meets top tennis hero Greg Rusedski
Page 5

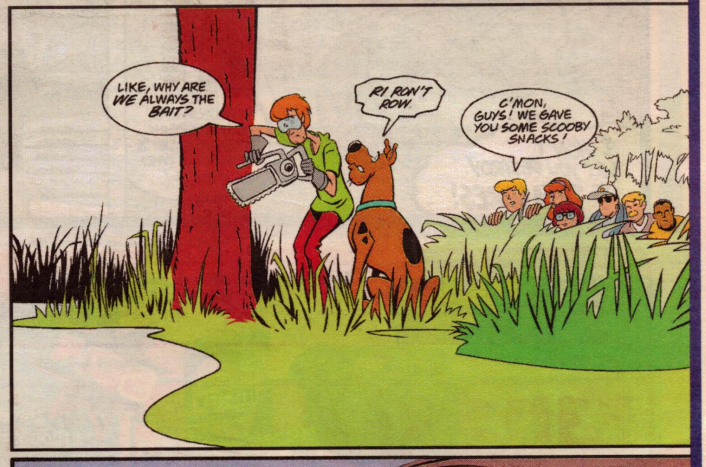
Rockin' pop
Buzz goes crazy over the hot new band on the block, the Dum Dums
Page 9

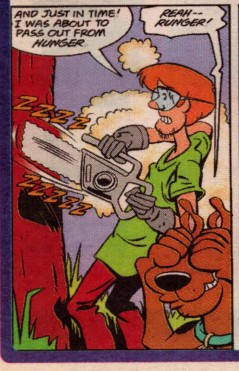
Mel and Lisa
Melanie C talks to Funday about her stunning new single featuring TLC's Lisa
Page 11

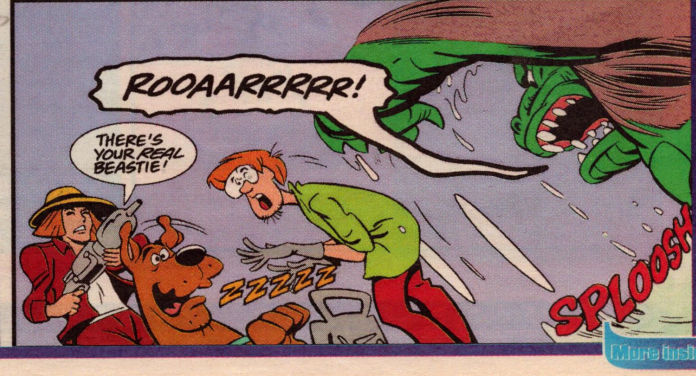
SCOOBY-DOO! in LAST OF THE MUGWUMPS

The story so far – Velma and the gang have just come face to face with the terrifying mugwump in the everglades!

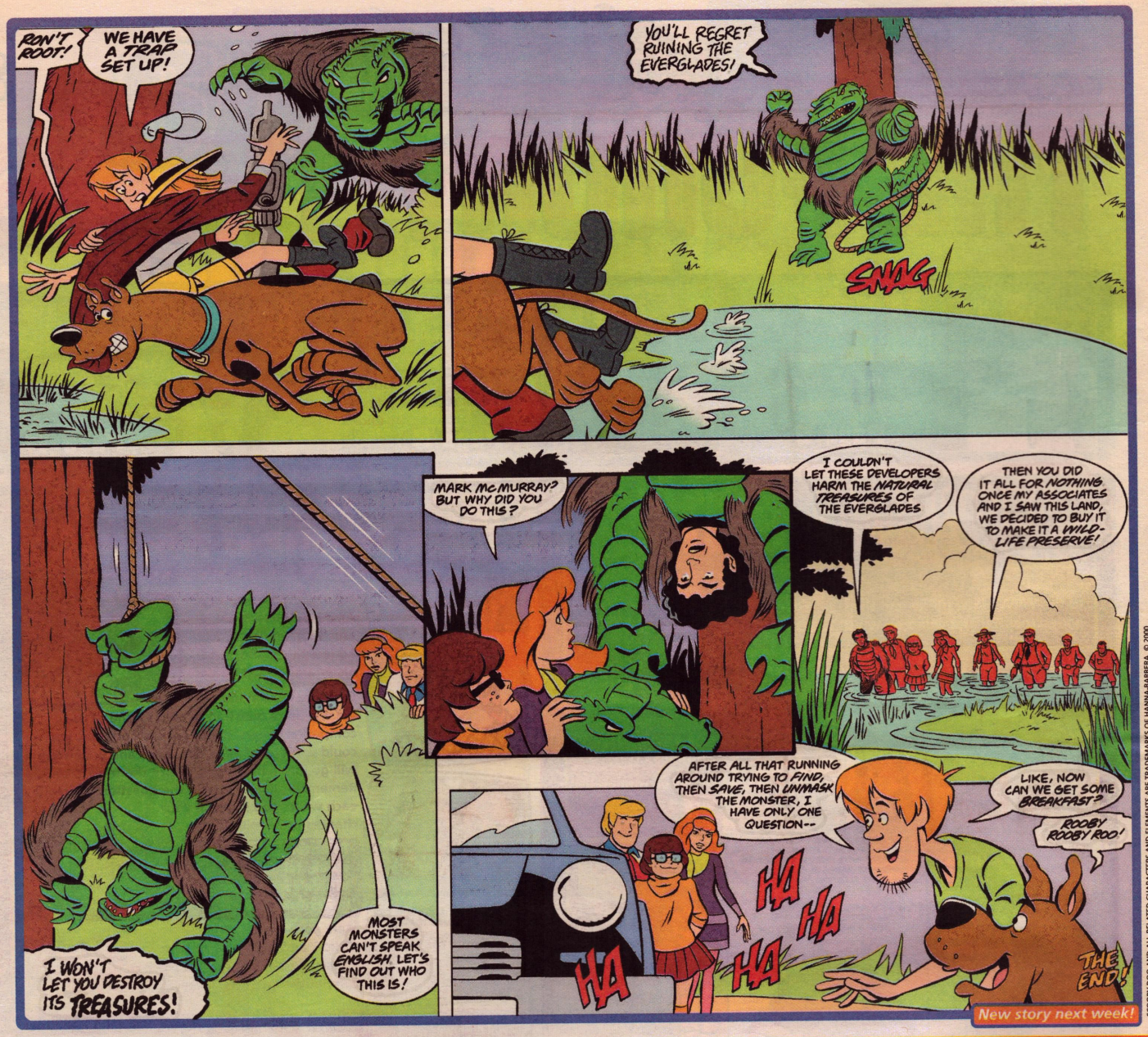








More inside



New story next week!

SCOOBY-DOO AND ALL RELATED CHARACTERS AND ELEMENTS ARE TRADEMARKS OF HANNA-BARBERA. © 2000

f-mail

Send your letters, cartoons, jokes and drawings to: The Funday Times, PO Box 5073, Leighton Buzzard LU7 7GX Send your e-mail to: funday.times@sunday-times.co.uk

FLASH CAMERA

This fantastic Fujifilm Instax 100 instant camera will help you become a real super snapper! You can take fun photos of your friends and family and see the results in just seconds. The Instax 100 (£24.99) is really easy to use – just point the camera, press the button and impress everyone with your talent at taking photos! The star f-mail will get a Fujifilm Instax 100 with five packs of film. Each runner-up gets a camera and a single pack of film.

STAR

Dear f-mail,
I've just read Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë. It's a really exciting book with a really good story line, and a twist at the end. When my mate suggested it I thought it would be really boring and old fashioned but it's made me realise that you really shouldn't judge a book by its cover! Some of my friends think it's sad to read classic novels and think that they're just for school. I'd like to say to other Funday readers that it's worth trying to read these books, because, although they're hard to get into, they can be excellent once you've read them.
Maddy Hardberry, via e-mail
I hope you enjoy our World Book Day feature on page six, Maddy – Ed.

Dear f-mail,
I think The Funday Times is really cool. This is a picture of Jane the Pain, the girl Dennis the Menace secretly fancies! My favourite cartoons in Funday are Squirt, Rex and Tex, The Creature Feature and especially Asterix and Obelix. I haven't missed a single issue of it!
Charlotte Flint, Reading

Scooby-Doo returns next week in Three Shears For Shaggy – only in The Funday Times

FUN Competitions!

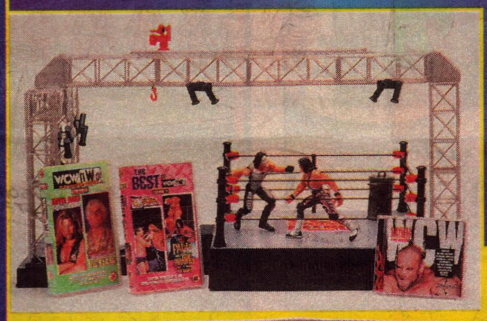
COMPETITION ADDRESS Send answers to all competitions to us at: The Funday Times, PO Box 5073, Leighton Buzzard LU7 7GX. Competition deadline: March 15
You can e-mail your competition answers to: funday.competitions@sunday-times.co.uk

LET'S RUMBLE!

Wrestle-mania is back – and the stars of WCW are ready to rumble! You can watch them any time you like with two new videos from Warner Home Video.

Dedicated grapple fans can cheer on their favourite wrestlers and enjoy hours of action on WCW Superstars Series II: Kevin Nash and Ric Flair and Uncensored/Fall Brawl.

Our winner gets the two latest additions to the WCW video range and this fabulous widescreen TV and video on which to watch them! Plus, the winner gets an electronic wrestling ring, complete with figures, courtesy of Vivid Imaginations, and a soundtrack anthems CD.



Plus, five runners-up get a copy of both the videos.

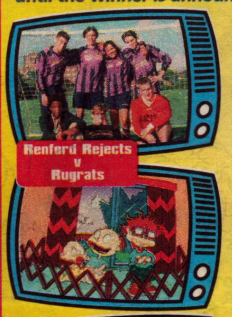
To enter, tell us what WCW stands for.

Mark your answer WRESTLE and send it, with your name and address, to the competition address above.

WATCH AND WIN!

Here's your next chance to win a fabulous family trip to Los Angeles to see the Nickelodeon Kids Choice Awards 2000 in April!

Nickelodeon is pitting its best live action shows against everyone's favourite Nicktoons in the Head To Head Championship 2000. You can vote for your favourite show in each round, every weekend, until the winner is announced on March 25.



The eight contenders are: Renford Rejects and Rugrats, Sabrina The Teenage Witch and Hey Arnold!, Kenan & Kel and SpongeBob Squarepants, and, Sister Sister and Rocket Power.

Over the next month, we will ask a question related to one of the competing shows. If you answer correctly, you could win one of 10 goodie bags and your entry will go into a final draw to win the trip. Remember, if you answer the questions correctly each week, you increase your chances of winning!

To enter this week, tell us Vinnie's nickname in Renford Rejects.

Mark your entry VINNIE and send it, with your name, age and address, to the competition address above.

Normal TNL competition rules apply to all Funday Times competitions

Dear f-mail,
I thought the article on Starlight Express (issue 545) was really great.
I went to London last summer with my family and we went to see the show. We thought it was absolutely amazing. The costumes and make-up were fabulous, and the way the show was set out and performed was stunning. I was really pleased when I read the article and found all of it really interesting, as I didn't know how much time, effort and preparation went into the show! Keep up the good work!
Andrew Blucher, 14, Chester

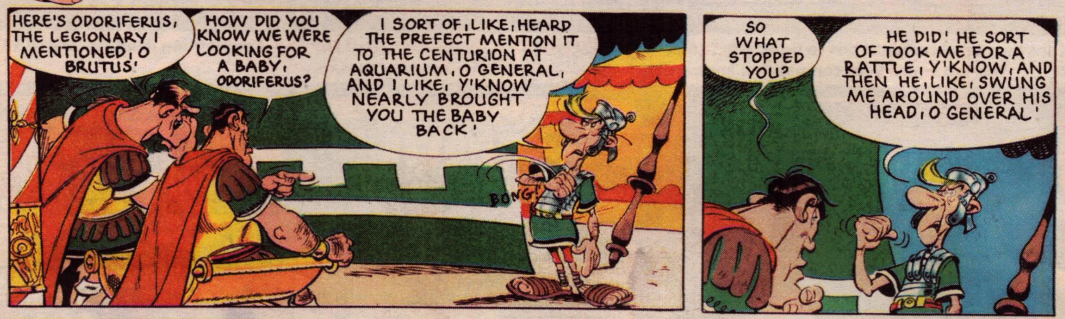
PICTURE: TONY BUCKINGHAM

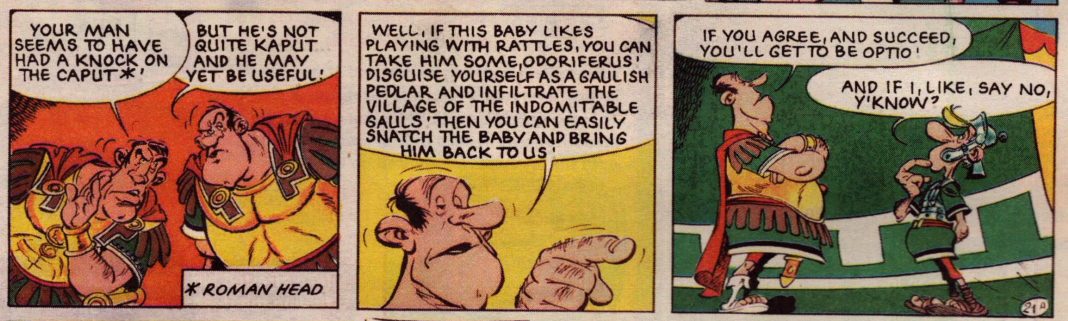
Yvette Henstock, Mansfield

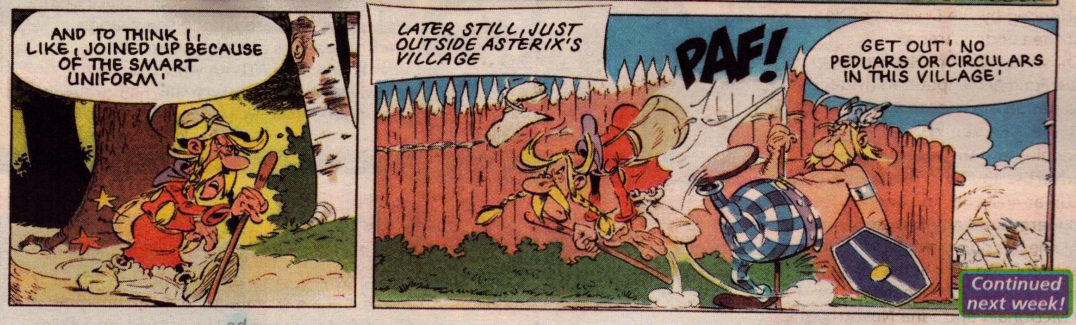
Dear f-mail,
I read The Funday Times news (issue 545) and I saw the piece on 'Pied Piper II'. I was interested because at my school we are studying the Pied Piper of Hamlyn at the moment. I wrote a story based on the legend. In the story I had a character like the Pied Piper who helps someone with their homework and they promise to pay him a sum of money, but they break the promise and the Pied Piper character seeks revenge!
Oliver Hawtree, via e-mail

Asterix and Son

© 2000 LES ÉDITIONS ALBERT RENÉ/GOSCINNY-UDERZO







DAGSY DOG

Woof, woof! Got any pet problems? Then get in touch with me at the address below!

My cat Polly scratches people and objects all the time. Why does she do this and is there anything that can be done to stop her?
Emily Franklin, Gloucestershire

Scratching is part of a cat's normal behaviour. They use it as a way of keeping their claws sharp. You can distract Polly from shredding the carpets by buying a scratching post and sprinkling it with cat nip. You can also reduce the damage Polly causes by regularly clipping her sharp claws.

Pets can now travel abroad thanks to the Passports for Pets scheme that began last week. To travel, your cat or dog must be fitted with an identity microchip, and vaccinated against rabies. Passports will be issued after a special blood test by an authorised laboratory. The pilot scheme is only running on European ferries at the moment. For further information, visit the website at www.maff.gov.uk or call the helpline: 0870 241 1710.

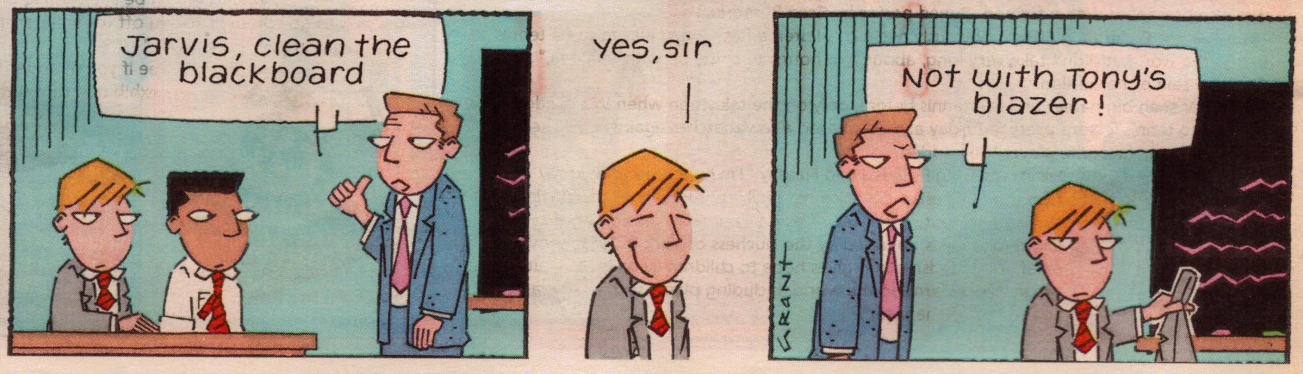
Answers by Catherine Morganti with Alison Thomas

If you have a question for me or you want to send in a cool fact, write to:
The Funday Times, Dagsy Dog, PO Box 495, London E1 9XW

The Blue Cross, one of Britain's largest animal welfare charities, has three animal hospitals, two veterinary clinics, 11 adoption centres and two equine centres nationally. Last year the charity found homes for more than 8,000 animals and treated more than 60,000 pets at its hospitals.

ILLUSTRATIONS: PAUL CEMMICK

Jarvis



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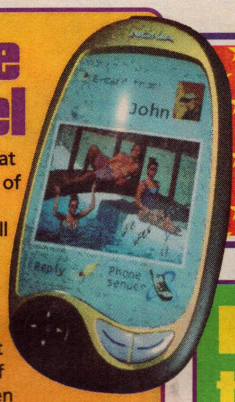
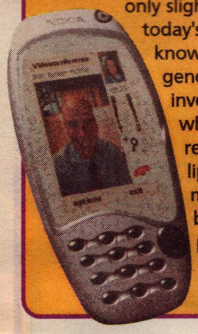
If you'd like Dagsy to answer your pet question, drop him a line today!

NEWS

Mobile marvel



Here's a taste of what the new generation of mobile phones will look like – and they'll be here soon!
Known as the 3G, which stands for third generation, these phones will let you send e-mail, surf the internet and even download pictures – wherever you are. The screen allows you to see the person you're chatting with, and they will be able to see you too, thanks to a tiny built-in camera. Both versions of 3G will be only slightly bigger than today's mobile phones – known as the second generation. The inventors at Nokia who created 3G are remaining tight-lipped on how much it will cost, but say the phones will be on sale in less than two years.



Hop to it!

Calling all nature sleuths! Frog fans are needed to take part in the largest-ever nationwide wildlife survey. The UK Wildlife Trust hope 'tadpoleteers' across the country will spend this month checking out frog spawning sites across the country and send their results to conservationists as part of UK Wild 2000. Apparently, frog numbers are falling because of rising pollution and the disappearance of natural ponds. "Frogs are a really good indicator of changes in the environment, especially pollution levels," says amphibian expert Mark Nicholson. "There's still a lot that we don't know about frogs and the survey is a great way of getting involved in wildlife conservation. Plus, taking part is really easy – just head for your nearest pond!"
For details, send a large, stamped addressed envelope to: UK Wild 2000, PO Box 1457, Bristol BS99 3NS.

Boot looter

A bungling bank robber was caught red-handed after locking himself in the boot of his getaway car. Lucas Winters of Oregon, USA, lost his balance while rushing to escape and fell into the boot, along with his loot! His fate was sealed when the lid slammed shut behind him. A police officer who heard his muffled cries for help arrested him on the spot after finding the stolen money, a gun and a disguise! "Some people should stick to staying at home and watching TV," advised the officer. "Robbery is no business for this man to be in."

Top draw!

Funday Times winner Christine Klee proved a smash hit recently when she was a special guest at the York Tennis Challenge Cup, attended by the Duchess of York, at the London Arena.
Christine, 14, from Newcastle, won the Funday competition (issue 527) to design a poster to support the charity Children in Crisis. Her prize-winning poster was then used to advertise the York Tennis Challenge Cup at 400 sites on London's Underground and bus stops.
At the London Arena, Christine not only enjoyed two hours of fun-packed tennis entertainment, involving Sir Cliff Richard, Stefan Edburg, Goran Ivanisevic, Sir Trevor McDonald and Jana Novotna, she was also presented with a framed, signed poster by Greg Rusedski.
"As it was for Children in Crisis it obviously needed children and the idea was to use a tennis ball as the world. It didn't take very long, about two hours, to come up with the idea," Christine said of her design.
"I've never seen big names and live tennis before, only on the television when Wimbledon is on. I go to tennis lessons every Saturday and I've played a few matches against other teams. Steffi Graf's my favourite player," she added.

British ace Greg Rusedski told Funday: "I'm honoured to have my name on her design. Christine has really captured what the whole event is all about, and what it's trying to achieve. It's a work of art!"
Children in Crisis, founded by the Duchess of York in 1993, provides relief from hardship and gives hope to children living in difficult circumstances around the world, including places such as Sierra Leone and Afghanistan.

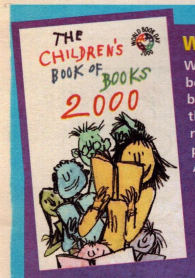
Looking to the future

Flying saucers, a submarine and a car that wouldn't look out of place in a sci-fi film are among the strange creations at a new sculpture exhibition. These wacky wonder machines are the brainchild of Belgian artist Panamarenko and you can see them at London's Hayward Gallery.
Among the fantasy sculptures, which all have a transport theme, are a miniature jet, a giant airship and a jet-powered backpack.
"His creations are truly out of this world," says Alison Wright of the Hayward Gallery. "You can imagine what it would be like putting on a flying rucksack to go school or taking off for an inter-stellar space flight in your break time."
Entry is free if you're under 12, and the exhibition runs until April 2.

PICTURES ©GEOFF TRINDER, TONY BUCKINGHAM ©PANAMARENKO

Read all about it!

It's World Book Day on Friday and Funday gives you a guide to the current cool reads to be seen with!



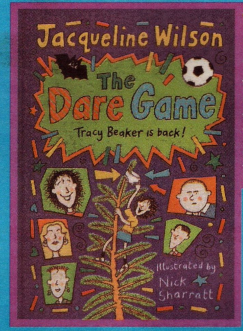
What is World Book Day?

World Book Day is a global bonanza of book reading! There are hundreds of book-related events happening all over the UK, from treasure hunts and readathons to exhibitions and signings, plus there are online events as well. And this year, more than 13 million Book Tokens will be distributed to schools, that's enough for every child in the UK and Ireland! Plus, the results of the biggest-ever poll to find the country's favourite children's author will be announced.

The Children's Book of Books has been specially published to celebrate the event. It costs £1 and contains stories by nine top children's authors, including Helen Dunmore and Michael Rosen. The World Book Day tradition began in Catalonia, in Spain, on St George's Day – a day on which friends and family traditionally exchange books and roses. St George was the patron saint of Catalonia. This year World Book Day is earlier than usual, to avoid the Easter holidays.

For more information, click on the website www.worldbookday.com

WORLD BOOK DAY



THE DARE GAME Jacqueline Wilson

★★★★

Tracy Beaker is finding life as tough as ever, yet with her feisty spirit she's going to enjoy it anyway! Foster-mum Cam and friends Football and Alexander soon learn that there's no stopping Tracy. The Dare Game, the sequel to The Story Of Tracy Beaker, has as much energy and life as Tracy herself. In Tracy's own words: "I dare you not to say this is the most brilliant story ever!"

ZILLAH & ME Helen Dunmore

★★★★

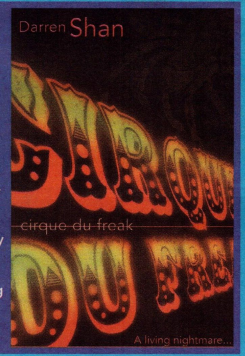
After her dad's tragic death, Katie and her mum move away from London to start life anew. Katie finds it hard to adjust to a rural existence in Cornwall, without phones and showers. Then Zillah arrives, and Katie slowly befriends the girl that harbours a great deal of unhappiness. A charming book that explores the themes of friendship and grief with real understanding.

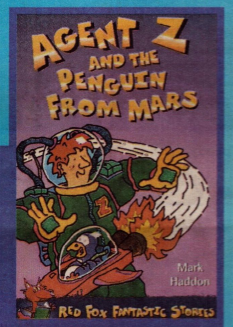
CIRQUE DU FREAK Darren Shan

★★★★★

This is the first book in the Darren Shan saga, and what a beginning it is! Darren visits a mysterious freak show that leads him on a spiralling journey into a dark world of vampires. The finale is a nerve-shredding race against time in which Darren must question his loyalty to friends and family – and just how much he is prepared to sacrifice for them! A book that leaves you longing for a second bite.

See our exclusive interview with Darren Shan on page 11!

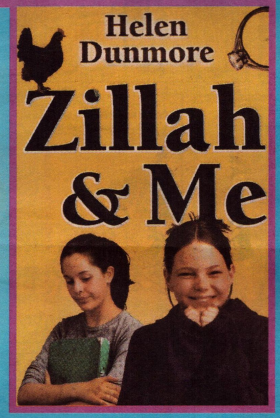


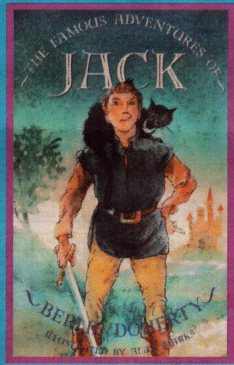


AGENT Z AND THE PENGUIN FROM MARS Mark Haddon

★★★★★

Ben, Barney and Jenks are mates that live secret double lives. Together, they are Agent Z – a team dedicated to playing the most outrageous practical jokes ever! Yet, when moronic wazzock Dennis Sidebottom moves in next door, he threatens to end their crazy antics. Agent Z has more twists and turns than a Swiss mountain road and will make you laugh a lot!





THE FAMOUS ADVENTURES OF JACK Berlie Doherty

★★★

When Jill is given a bag of goodies by the Old Feller Storyteller, she can't imagine how many stories it contains, and each one is about Jack! With the help of Mother Greenwood and her black cat, Jill discovers that there are lots of different Jacks, and each story takes Jill into a world of magicians and dragons, and the most gruesome giant of all! Along the way, Jill soon finds herself in a story of her own. Exciting stuff!

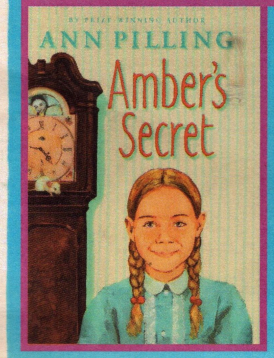
TWO MOONS Martha Brooks

★★★★★

During the summer of 1959, Sidonie should be having a ball, but she's not. She's coming to terms with the loss of her mother – who died nearly a year ago on her birthday. While swimming, she meets Kieran and his friendship is just what Sidonie needs. This wonderful story stretches out like a long hot summer – and just like the school holidays, you don't want it to come to an end.

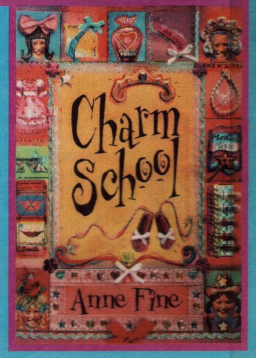
AMBER'S SECRET Ann Pilling ★★★★

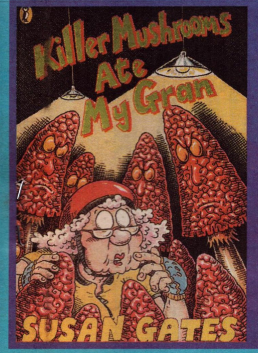
With her mum in hospital and her dad abroad, it seems Sally's world is a never-ending struggle. And when Sally breaks her mother's prize grandfather clock she is guilt-ridden. Thanks to friend Amber's secret, Sally sets about repairing the clock and in doing so turns her world around. An inspiring tale that has lots to say about courage and love despite being set 50 years ago.



CHARM SCHOOL Anne Fine ★★★

Poor Bonny, she's moved house, has no friends and she's taking a class ... in the holidays! How bad can one day be? Well, in a beauty pageant class called Charm School things get quite horrific! Bonny finds that, while appearing to be sweet as sugar, the Charm School girls are bitter, nasty and obsessed with their looks. Once things get going, Charm School is a great read.

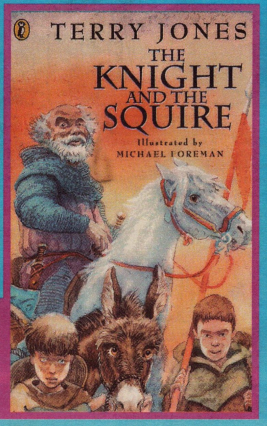




KILLER MUSHROOMS ATE MY GRAN Susan Gates

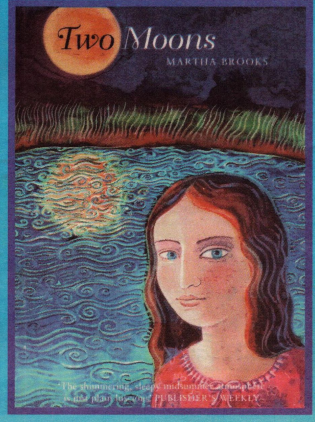
★★★★

Prepare to be afraid, every time you visit your grocer! Maggot's gran is upset after her groom-to-be Jack Dash disappears. Spurred on to solve the mystery, Maggot ventures to Jack's mushroom farm and makes a terrifying discovery. Deadly blood-red mushrooms with the power to take over your brain! Lots of goo and fun make Susan Gates' book a real mush-read!

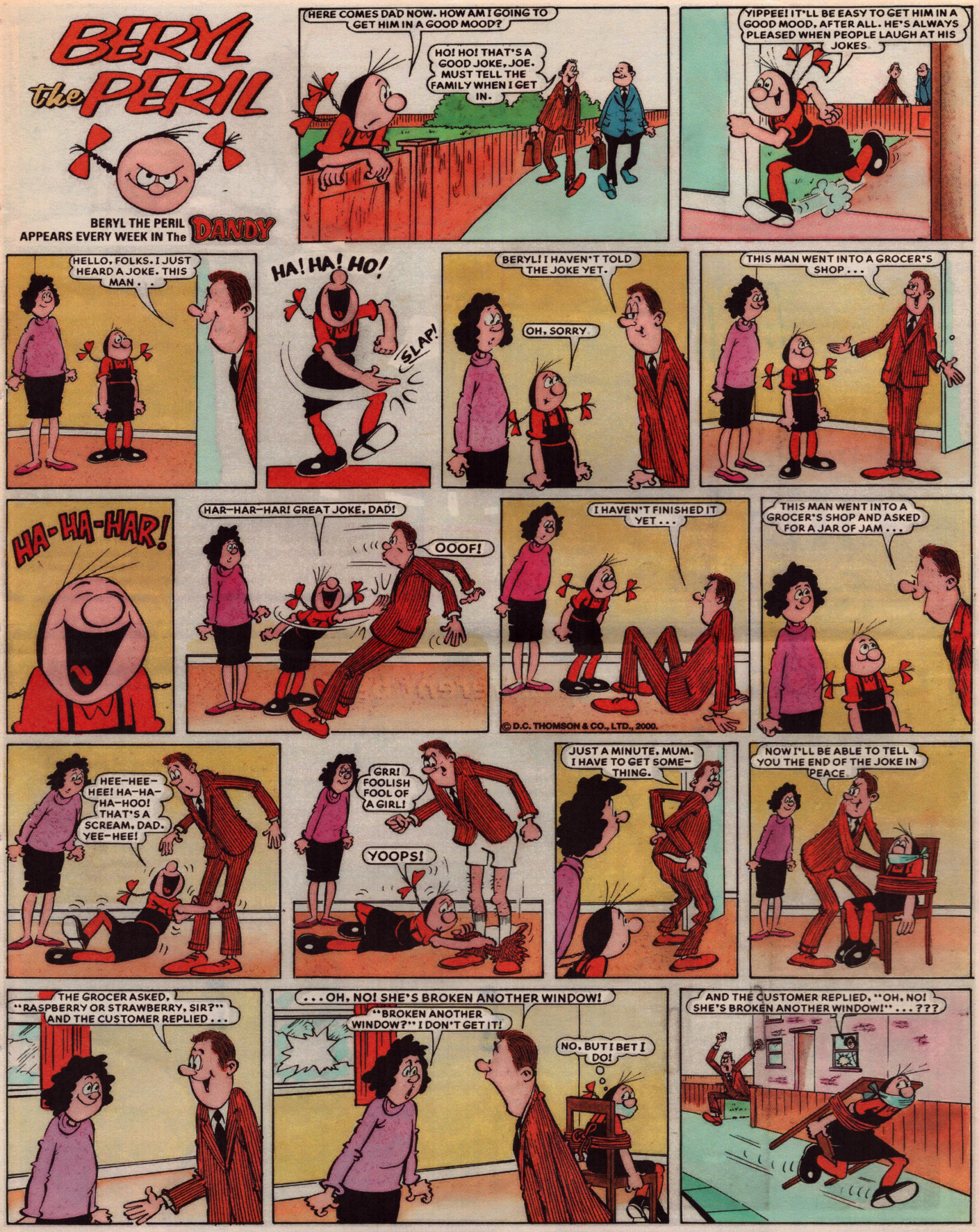


THE KNIGHT AND THE SQUIRE Terry Jones ★★★

Life changes for Tom one night, after he decides to run away from his mediaeval village. He wants a life of adventure rather than studying in a monastery, and he soon finds it! Tom joins Alan, a squire to a knight called Sir John Hawkley. But Alan is not who he seems and this is only the beginning their adventure. If you like tales of old when knights were bold, read on!



PICTURES: MARCUS ROSS/HOOP ASSOCIATES

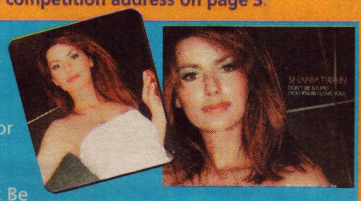


Join Beryl next week for another smashing adventure!

POP-TAILS

Funday has got two fabulous pop competitions for you this week! Just mark your entries with the key words shown and send them, with your name, age and address, to the usual competition address on page 3.

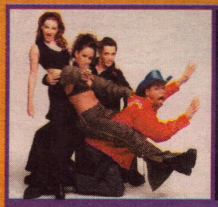
Stupid stuff!



To celebrate Shania Twain's new hit – Don't Be Stupid – we've got five fab Shania goodie packs up for grabs. If you've enjoyed Shania's previous smash singles, then you probably agree with us that Don't Be Stupid is just as fine. Each goodie bag contains an exclusive Shania Twain mouse-mat and a Don't Be Stupid CD single. These fab enhanced CDs include two mixes of the track – plus the video. So, if you've got a PC or Mac at home, you can watch Shania's water-logged dance routine!

To enter, tell us the name of Shania's current chart-topping album.
Mark your entry SHANIA.

Cool cuts



Dance music label Positiva always releases some of the coolest singles around. Right now they've got two fantastic tracks in the chart – the Vengaboys' Shalala Lala and Wisdome's Off The Wall ... and a fab competition in Funday! We've got five Positiva prize packs up for grabs. Each contains a copy of the Vengaboys and Wisdome CD singles, plus one contains a trendy Positiva rain jacket too!

To enter, just name another hit single by the Vengaboys.
Mark your entry POSITIVA.

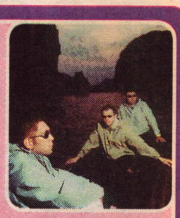
POSITIVA

PICTURES ©EMI RECORDS STEVE SHAW CLAUDINE GRIN MARK O FLAHERTY

FUNDAY FRESH!

SINGLE

VOICES Dario G ★★★★★



Even if you're too young to see The Beach, you can still enjoy the soundtrack album – and don't scoff, it's one of the best things about the film anyway. Of course, All Saints grabbed all the attention with Pure Shores, their number one hit from the album, but this second release by Dario G is just as good. Perhaps it's not quite the right time of year for such sun-drenched sounds, but this dreamy track actually makes a great winter warmer. Unlike Dario G's previous up-tempo singles, Voices has a laid-back vibe and echoey vocals.

BAG IT UP Geri ★★★★★

When Geri said her album, Schizophonic, was going to be like a compilation by various artists, she wasn't joking. As you'll have noticed by now, each single she has released from it has been completely different – and Bag It Up continues the trend. This time, Geri's having a disco party, with all her mates. So it's time for some terrifying party outfits, flashing lights and lots of energetic dancing. Even if you're in a bad mood, Bag It Up will cheer you up. It's even more uplifting than Lift Me Up!

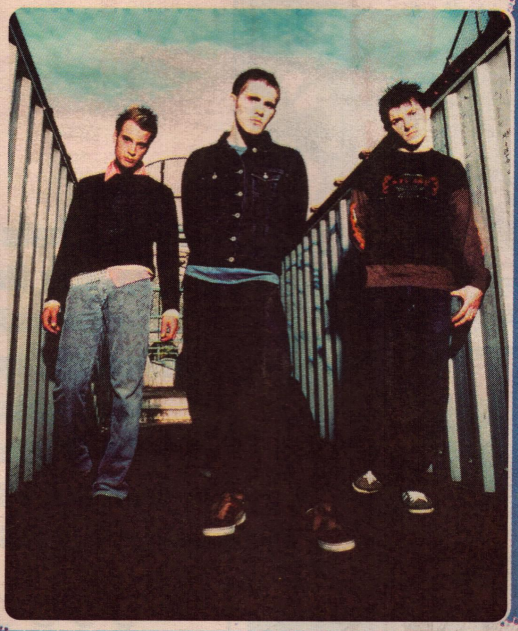
SINGLE

SINGLE

IT MUST BE LOVE Mero ★★★★●

Hooray! We've been talking about them for ages, and finally Mero's great debut single, It Must Be Love, is about to be released. The lads have had a long wait, but it will all be worth it once people can actually lay their hands on this classic track. Derek and Tommy are both big Motown fans and, on this single, you can tell. They've combined some old fashioned beats with a new song to create a classic single that has a warmly-familiar feel, even when you listen to it for the first time. It Must Be Love – and it must also be time for Mero to have the top 10 hit they deserve.

FUNDAY BUZZ!



A different beat

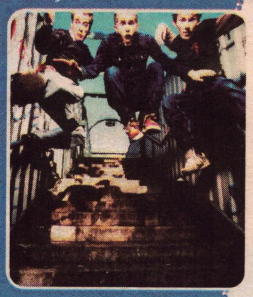
Listen up! There's a new band around, and they don't perform dance routines. They are real friends, who write songs and have fun together. Along the way they also create great pop music too – and their first single, Everything, is already a hit. Funday Buzz met the Dum Dums to find out their story.

Your name, Dum Dums, isn't that great, is it?
Steve: I know! The name was knocking around right from the start, when we first met. We have tried to get rid of it about 450 times, but pretty quickly it became our identity and people remembered it. So, we decided we had to stick with it.

The video to your single, Everything, is quite crazy. What was it like to make?
Josh: It was very painful! We were on wires, and we had to hold some really weird positions. It's fun to watch though – because they used a lot of the out-takes in the finished video. So, there are shots of making faces that we thought would never be used.
Stuart: While we were making it they moved all the couches around to make it look like the room was moving. We had no idea what was going on – it was only when we saw the finished video that we got it.

Why do you think Funday readers should spend their pocket-money on your single?
Josh: We really want young people to get into our music. At the moment they are force-fed things like Britney and Aqua and there's nothing much else to choose from. But we are a bit different. If kids do get into us it will be great and very satisfying for us.

What do you do in your spare time?
Josh: I like relaxing at home, going to the cinema and hanging with my mates. I also like PlayStation, and I'm quite good at it.



Do you cheat?
Josh: No, I never cheat because that spoils the game. But once I've finished a game, then I use the cheats.

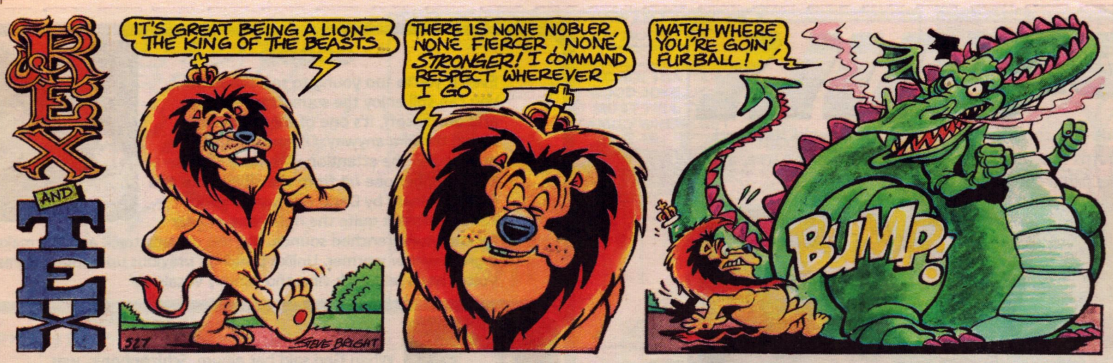
Who's got the worst habit?
Josh: Steve! He looks in the mirror a lot because he is ALWAYS doing his hair.

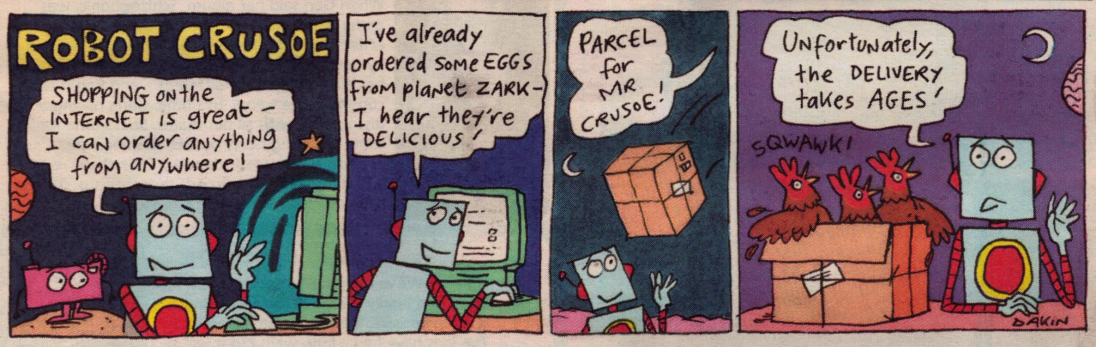
Tell us something about the others that they might be embarrassed by.
Stuart: Steve would be embarrassed if you knew he was really good at cooking and mending things. If he doesn't make it as a pop star, he'll make a brilliant housekeeper!

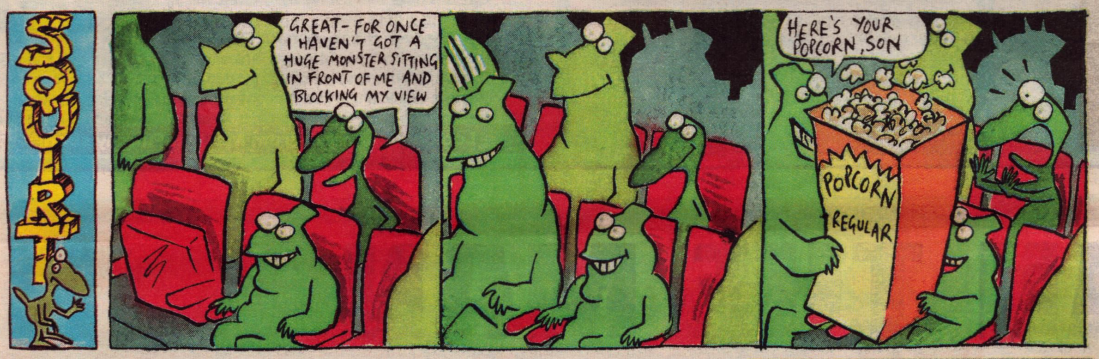
If Britney and Christina both asked to meet you at the same time – what would you do?
Stuart: I'd meet Christina Aguilera, because she's got an amazing voice. Britney's talented as well, but the vocals on Christina's current single are amazing and she's also very pretty!

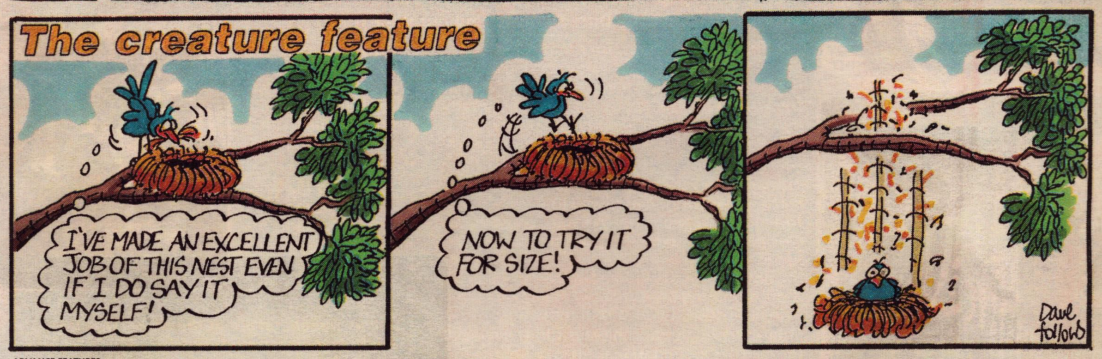
What can we expect from you next?
Josh: Quite a wide variety of stuff. The single, Everything, is at the heavier end of our musical spectrum, so the next single will be a bit more pop than this one. It will still have our heavy guitars on it though.

Check out Funday's exclusive interview with Mel C on page 11!

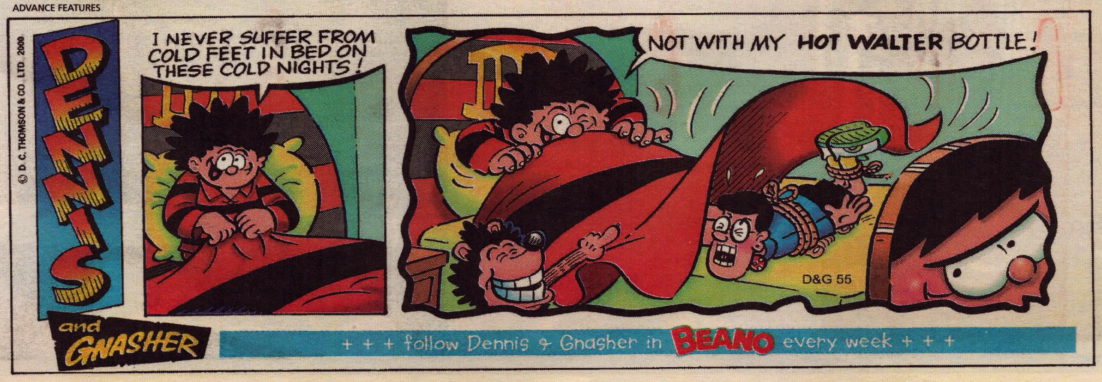








ADVANCE FEATURES



NEXT WEEK in FUNDAY

PICTURE: ALBERTO TOLOT

Buzz chats to Jessica Simpson the US teenager who's all set to follow Britney's route to fame and fortune

Scottish lads Mero enjoy a day out at London's Rock Circus

Funday catches up with the Kids Council to reveal the latest news about the Disney Channel Kids Awards 2000

A CUP OF TEA WITH MELANIE C

Melanie C's got a gem of a new single out this month, Never Be The Same Again – a collaboration with TLC's Lisa 'Left Eye' Lopez. Dave Coombs chats to the Spice Girl over a nice cup of tea!

PICTURES: BLAKE LITTLE

Hi Melanie, what are you up to today?
I'm at home in my kitchen. I've been at the gym this morning and this afternoon I'm going to take it easy. I've got some phone calls to make, but I'm going to have a quiet evening in.

How is the new Spice Girls album going?
It's progressing very well at the moment. We're all working hard on it.

You've said you'd like to work with Madonna. Wouldn't that be quite scary?
I would say yes, but on meeting her and talking to her a few times, I think it would actually be great. I know she's got a reputation for being a hard lady and a bit of a slave driver, but she's lovely when you talk to her.

Is it true you ignored Madonna once?
It was worse than that – I put my hand on her knee to lean over her and talk to someone else! When I noticed it was her and apologised she laughed and said something like: "It's okay, I know I'm easily mistaken."

What do you think of Madonna's American Pie?
It's not one of my favourites, and it's not a Madonna classic, but you've got to take in the context of her new film.

Was making Northern Star different from making a Spice Girls album?
It was so different. From day one I met new writers and producers. There were so many different things I wanted to express, but I tried not to put too much pressure on myself. I just went in there and did it!

Weren't you a bit more bossy than usual?
I'm not normally a bossy person. With the Spice Girls I suppose I can quite bossy, especially since the ginger one left. But someone has to keep them in line!

Do you miss having long hair?
Yes! I'm growing it at the moment. It's not very long yet, but I think it will be in a bob by the summer.

Why don't you cheat and have extensions put in?
No ... I've seen Geri's hair! The thing is, extensions look great in pictures, but they're not very nice in real life.

What does your hair look like first thing in the morning?
Oh my god, when I wake up it's dreadful. It's all spiky, a real mess.

Where do you stand on the Christina versus Britney debate?
Oh, I think it's six of one and half a dozen of the other. Christina is a complete diva, and very talented vocally, but Britney is more wholesome.

What can you cook?
Last night I made a tofu stir fry. That's probably my best dish.

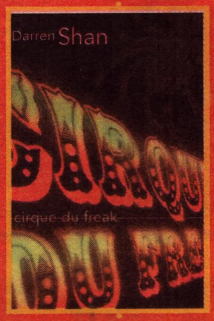
What's the most embarrassing record you own?
The only one I've got that's quite embarrassing is a Kylie album, the one with Step Back In Time on it. But I liked it when I got it. I also like the Backstreet Boys, but that's not embarrassing because they're quite wicked!

Look out for more from Mel C in Funday soon!

SHAN THE MAN

One of the most talked about books of the year is Darren Shan's Cirque Du Freak. Paul Wray meets the writer behind the vampire-based saga

Where did you get the inspiration for Cirque Du Freak from?
It started with my interest in vampires. I was fascinated with them since I was a child, and had a big photo of Christopher Lee [famous Dracula actor] on my bedroom wall when I was 6 years old! I'd been toying with the idea of writing a vampire book for years, but didn't want to simply repeat the same old stories.



What sort of books or films influenced you?
I'm a filmaholic and watch two or three movies a day! Those which had a big influence on me were horror and fantasy films, which I immersed myself in when growing up. Stephen King's Salem's Lot – first the film, then the book – had a huge impact on me.

How many Darren Shan books will there be?
There will be 20 plus books in The Saga Of Darren Shan. I can't be much more accurate than that, though I think it will probably come in around the 24 or 25 book mark. I've written the first nine!

Why are people fascinated by vampires?
The main reason why is that the vamps are almost always portrayed on-screen by suave, handsome hunks! In my books, I play around with this idea. Creatures that live by night, and in rough conditions, are unlikely to look good, and most of my vampires are fabulously ugly!

Why did you decide to go against the usual idea that vampires are evil?
I never understood why vampires had to be evil. Vampire bats aren't evil, they simply obey their nature. Why should they kill? Why not take just some blood, while people are sleeping, unseen and unbothered? It's more sensible not to kill, and also makes life easier for the vampires. No lynch mobs to hunt them down!

Did you do anything that you were warned against doing when you were younger, like in Cirque Du Freak?
Like many kids, I was a real monster when I was little, and always did the opposite of what I was told! As for sneaking off one night to a real-life freak show with my best friend ... no comment!

What will be unfolding in Book Two: The Vampire's Assistant?
Darren's struggles to come to terms with the changes in his life. He refuses to take the big step that will drive him forever forward, and doesn't want to drink blood, even though he'll die if he doesn't. On the brighter side, he makes friends with the snake-boy at the freak show – Evra Von – and we meet Cormac Limbs, a most extraordinary freak (even by the standards of the others). But if you thought the ending of Cirque Du Freak was dark, wait till you see this one!

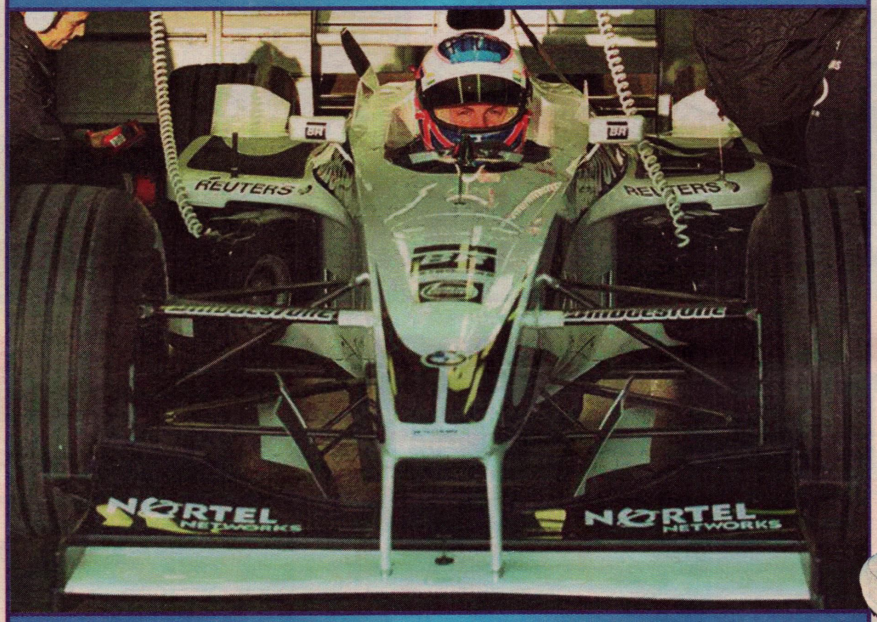
Will Darren's friend Steve return?
Steve returns far down the line, in Book Eight: Allies Of The Night!

You recently signed a big film deal for Darren Shan, so, who would be ideal as Darren?
The young boy in the film The Sixth Sense would be ideal for the title role, though he's probably a bit young for it at the moment. And everybody agrees that Christopher Walken would make a superb Mr Crepsley!

THE FUNDAY TIMES
sport

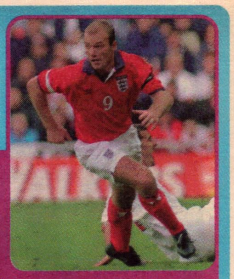
JENSON BUTTON

The new Formula One season gets under way next weekend, with the likes of Michael Schumacher, Mika Hakkinen and David Coulthard hoping to lift the world title. New British star Jenson Button doesn't expect to end up as champion this year, but he is certainly hoping to make a mark as the sport's youngest driver! He might not have the experience of some rivals, but Jenson has the skill and confidence to be a F1 star!



- Jenson made his name racing small karts on circuits around the world – the same way that Michael Schumacher first started racing!
- At the age of 20, Jenson is one of the youngest drivers in Formula One history
- He was born in Frome, Somerset
- Jenson first drove a kart when he was eight years old, and he won the race!
- He will drive for the Williams team this season alongside German ace Ralf Schumacher, who is Michael's brother

sport news



PICTURES ALLSPORT, PA

Alan blows the whistle

Alan Shearer stunned the football world by announcing that he will stop playing for England after this summer's Euro 2000 Championship. Alan, who is only 29 years old, has decided that after that tournament he wants to concentrate on helping the fortunes of his beloved Newcastle United. But after scoring 28 goals in just 57 matches, England are sure to miss his shooting skills.

King of Kenya

British star Richard Burns produced a dazzling performance to win the Safari Rally in Kenya. He dominated the event, regarded as the toughest rally in the world, winning it by a huge margin of nearly four minutes. Fellow British star Colin McRae didn't fare so well though – he waterlogged his car's engine while trying to cross a river. Whoops!

Tiger is tamed

In his best golfing performance ever, Britain's Darren Clarke beat Tiger Woods to take the Andersen Consulting World Match Play crown in California – winning £620,000 in the process. After a long and tiring round of five qualifying matches, super-fit Tiger was expected to win the title but found Darren in amazing form. "Darren simply outplayed me," Tiger admitted.

SOLE COOL!

The cool new Tampa trainers from Patrick are the latest in funky footwear. They not only look great, they feel great too!

Equally at home on the track or the street, Patrick's new range of shoes and clothes are available now at JJB Sports.

Our winner gets a pair of Patrick Tampa trainers, plus a cool sweat-shirt and jogging bottoms.

Plus, 10 runners-up get a sweat-shirt and jogging bottoms.

To enter, tell us the date of St Patrick's Day.

Mark your entry JJB and send it, with your name, shoe size and address, to the competition address on page 3.

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